What is claimed is:

1. A liver function protecting or improving agent which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant as an active ingredient.

2. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to Claim 1, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

3. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to Claim 2, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

4. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to Claim 1, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

5. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to Claim 4, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

6. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to any of Claims 1 to 5, wherein the extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

7. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to any of Claims 1 to 6, which is administered orally.

8. The liver function protecting or improving agent according to any of Claims 1 to 7, wherein the liver function is a function affected by alcohol.

9. A food and drink which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant.

10. The food and drink according to Claim 9, which is useful for the protection or improvement of liver function.

11. The food and drink according to Claim 10, wherein the liver function is a function affected by alcohol.

12. The food and drink according to any of Claims 9 to 11, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

13. The food and drink according to Claim 12, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

14. The food and drink according to any of Claims 9 to 11, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

15. The food and drink according to Claim 14, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

16. The food and drink according to any of Claims 9 to 15, wherein the extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

17. A feed which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant.

18. The feed according to Claim 17, which is useful for the protection or improvement of liver function.

19. The feed according to Claim 18, wherein the liver function is a function affected by alcohol.

20. The feed according to any of Claims 17 to 19, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

21. The feed according to Claim 20, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

22. The feed according to any of Claims 17 to 19, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

23. The feed according to Claim 22, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

24. The feed according to any of Claims 17 to 23, wherein the extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

25. An additive for foods and drinks having liver function protecting or improving activity, which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant.

26. The additive for foods and drinks according to Claim 25, wherein the liver function is a function

affected by alcohol.

27. The additive for foods and drinks according to Claim 25 or 26, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

28. The additive for foods and drinks according to Claim 27, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

29. The additive for foods and drinks according to Claim 25 or 26, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

30. The additive for foods and drinks according to Claim 29, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

31. The additive for foods and drinks according to any of Claims 25 to 30, wherein the extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

32. A feed additive having liver function protecting or improving activity, which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant.

33. The feed additive according to Claim 32, wherein the liver function is a function affected by alcohol.

34. The feed additive according to Claim 32 or 33, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

35. The feed additive according to Claim 34, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

36. The feed additive according to Claim 32 or 33, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

37. The feed additive according to Claim 36, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

38. The feed additive according to any of Claims 32 to 37, wherein the extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

39. A method of screening for liver function protecting or improving agents, which comprises administering an alcohol and then a lipopolysaccharide to an animal to raise the blood GPT or GOT level of the animal, administering a test substance to the animal, and estimating the activity of the test substance to lower the blood GPT or GOT level of the animal.

40. The method according to Claim 39, wherein the animal is a mammal.

41. The method according to Claim 39 or 40, wherein the lipopolysaccharide is derived from a microorganism belonging to the group of enteric bacteria.

42. The method according to any of Claims 39 to 41, wherein the liver function is a function affected by

alcohol.

43. A method of protecting or improving liver function in an animal, which comprises feeding the animal with the liver function protecting or improving agent according to any of Claims 1 to 8 or the feed according to any of Claims 17 to 24.

44. The method according to Claim 43, wherein the animal is selected from the group consisting of livestock, poultry and cultivated fish.

45. A food and drink or feed for the protection or improvement of liver function which comprises a plant of the family Saxifragaceae or an extract of the plant as an active ingredient.

46. The food and drink or feed according to Claim 45, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Saxifraga.

47. The food and drink or feed according to Claim 46, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Saxifraga is Saxifraga stolonifera Meerb.

48. The food and drink or feed according to Claim 45, wherein the plant of the family Saxifragaceae belongs to the genus Hydrangea.

49. The food and drink or feed according to Claim 48, wherein the plant belonging to the genus Hydrangea is Hydrangea macrophylla Seringe var. Thunbergii Makino or Hydrangeae Dulcis Folium.

50. The food and drink or feed according to any of Claims 45 to 49, wherein the extract of the plant of the

family Saxifragaceae is an alcoholic extract of the residue of an aqueous medium extract of the plant of the family Saxifragaceae.

51. The food and drink or feed according to any of Claims 45 to 50, wherein the liver function is a function affected by alcohol.